

Newark Partnership for Leadsafe Children December Report



Lorie Coxson
Greater Newark HUD
Tenants' Coalition

Newark Partnership
For
Lead Safe
Children
Committee Member

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PARTNERSHIP FOR LEAD SAFE CHILDREN REPORT:

Lead Presentation at the City Council Health Care Meeting:

The partnership monthly meeting began with an update of the City Council Health Care Meeting which was held on November 6, 2000 at Newark's City Hall. New Jersey Citizen Action Representative Mr. John Weber informed us of who was in attendance at the meeting and what was discussed at such meeting. The Topics of discussion for the City Council Meeting with Council Woman Mami Bridgeforth where Statewide Legislation and Lead Inspections on Request.

STATEWIDE LEGISLATION:

The Senate Appropriations Committee passed The Lead Abatement Assistance Bill A2399. The Speaker of the Assembly, Jack Collins was instrumental in its passing. Some of the provisions of the Bill are low cost loans to abate lead hazards with loan guarantees to Summit Bank. Some of the money would be allocated to grants. The NJ Apartment Association does not support this Bill due to the \$2.00 rental fee charge, which would be imposed, on each unit to assist for grant payment.

LEAD INSPECTION ON REQUEST:

Mr. Peter Dillion of the Newark Department of Health assured us that there is a policy of inspections on request and this policy has been in place since January. Prior to Mr. Dillon's announcement of there being a existing policy of inspection on request, Council Women Bridgeforth made an agreement that she will see to there being a required lead inspection before the sale of a housing unit in Newark. We the Committee are concerned that this information has not been made public, nor has it been clearly spelled out anywhere to keep the people abreast of what progress has been made in this fight for our children and lead poisoning.

LETTERS OF INSPECTION ON REQUEST DOCUMENTATION:

Everyone in attendance has been asked to address a letter to Council Woman Bridgeforth in reference to documentation of "said Inspection on Request Policy." A sample of what such letter should contain was given to all in attendance to bring to their organization so each organization can compose a similar letter.

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETING:

All attending committee members were informed of an upcoming Council meeting where the public can come and address the issue of the Inspection on Request Policy and it's documentation and/or proof.

SURVEY:

All Committee Members were given a survey to complete to address the issue of convenience when asked and expected to attend the committee meetings and activities.

REPORT ON OUTREACH TO THE CHURCHES:

Ms. Lea McReynolds and Dr. Burner Spoke at an Outreach Lead Information Program to inform constituents of lead poisoning prevention measures and follow up measures, after which Ms. McReynolds addressed concerns and inquires of the people. This was a great success, it left the people well informed, and much more knowledgeable of how to protect their children from lead poisoning, as well as what to look out for in regards to lead based paint and dust.

TEEN POWERHOUSE:

On October 19,2000 Ms. Lea McReynolds of the Gateway Maternal Child Health Consortium gave a Lead Presentation at The Teen Powerhouse where she reports great success with the pre test and post test. In attendance were teen mothers and nurses of whom both were well informed of lead prevention and poisoning.

STAR LEDGER:

The subject of the November's Star Ledger issue on **Health panel urging lead free rule in Newark** was discussed. This article spoke of the health committee of Newark City Council proposing the city ordinance requiring homes to be lead free before they are sold.

The Newark health committee is in need of an ordinance which requires a certification that a house has been rendered lead free at the time of closing on any property sold in the city of Newark, "said West Ward Councilwomen Mamie Bridgeforth, who chairs the committee. " we're saying it must be done and they must file papers in city hall at the time indicating that it has been done."

Bridgeforth said she expects opposition from the real estate profession.

"I don't particularly feel its going to preclude people from buying houses in Newark," she said. "I think it's in everybody's best interest to have it done, particularly for the children and certainly for those who are buying property."

The health committee agreed such an ordinance should be recommended after spending much of the meeting talking about the need for residents to get a lead inspection.

Lead poisoning continues to be a problem, even though the city recently received a \$3 million grant to rid 250 homes of lead based paint. In 1998, 662 children were found to have elevated blood lead levels, according to the annual report by the state Health Department.

The Newark Partnership for Lead Safe Children has stated that there are 25,000 children under the age of 6 living in Newark and many of them are at high risk for lead poisoning.

LEAD AND PREGNANCY:

Ms. McReynolds gave a great deal of information regarding pregnancy and lead. She spoke of facts such as: pregnant women with lead in her system can pass it on to her unborn child. Lead can interfere with pregnancy according to some studies there is an indication that lead exposures may increase the risk of Premature Birth, Small size and Low Weight, Miscarriage or Stillbirth. Unborn babies can be exposed to Lead by the following ways:

- A pregnant woman breathes in or swallows lead.
- The lead enters her bloodstream.
- The Lead passed through the placenta (the organ that supplies oxygen and nutrients to the baby).
- The lead gets into the unborn baby's bones, as well as the brain and other organs.

In addition to this important information Ms. Reynolds asked that everyone please stress the importance of pregnant women getting tested.

CONCLUSION:

This meeting as well as many I have attended was very insightful, informative, and productive.

Lorie Coxson
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